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**HIZBULLOGISTICS**

**The Asymmetrical Application of Logistics in War**

by

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**A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.**

**Much of the content in this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**30 April 2010**

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## **Abstract**

This paper analyzes logistics in asymmetrical warfare and finds that the use of unconventional techniques have enabled insurgents to exploit adversaries at the tactical and operational levels of war. It examines the Israeli-Hizbullah War of 2006, as well as other U. S. military operations where insurgents have been successful in acquiring and protecting their weapons and supplies. Additionally, it examines several techniques used to stop the logistical flow of arms to insurgents. Although some of the preventive measures appear somewhat out-dated, they, along with some newer border and seaport security initiatives and capacity building programs, can help provide the stability needed to prevent the spread and use of arms among insurgents while also providing the needed security and protection for the population.

## Introduction

Throughout history, insurgents and radical organizations of nearly every size and shape have resorted to at least some form of warfare in order to achieve their objectives, whether they be political, economic, or otherwise. The tactical methods used to support their efforts have and will continue to present a tremendous set of tactical, operational, and strategic challenges to both conventional forces and state governments whose vast capabilities are sometimes restrained by either a lack of resources and the physical environment, or by legal, social, and moral responsibilities. One very important operational function that insurgents, and Hizbullah in particular, have been able to consistently exploit with great success because of those restraints listed above, has been within the all-encompassing realm of logistics.

As defined by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *logistics* is “planning and executing the movement and support of forces.” This includes the procurement, transportation, distribution, and storage of material and equipment.<sup>1</sup> For insurgents, these core logistical capabilities are accomplished chiefly through asymmetric means. The tactical and logistical methods used by insurgents to disrupt the enemy’s supply chain while maintaining their own has not only allowed them to survive in combat, but has also enabled them to exploit their adversaries at the operational and strategic levels of war. As recently witnessed in Lebanon, much of Hizbullah’s success against Israeli Defense Forces in 2006 can be accredited to their ability to procure a large arsenal of modern weaponry and store them within fortified and strategically sensitive structures.<sup>2</sup>

Through the analysis of past and present wars, readers will familiarize themselves with the tactical methods utilized by insurgents to overcome conventional forces and achieve their operational and strategic objectives. In so doing, conventional forces might gain some insight as to how certain methods and initiatives could be used to prevent the flow of arms to radical organizations not only in Lebanon, but to all nations unfortunately plagued by insurgency.

## The Procurement of Arms

There are many ways by which insurgents procure their weapons. They can find them lying about in the open, they can be given to them by the supporting population, or they can be purchased from various sources. More strikingly, they can even be obtained indirectly through the bad accounting practices of their opponents. Two fairly recent examples of this latter method were discovered by the U. S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) at Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq, between the years 2004 and 2005, and at Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A), between the years 2002 and 2008. Together, both commands managed to lose accountability of an estimated 412,000 small arms issued to Iraqi and Afghan security forces. These weapons ranged anywhere from pistols and rifles to grenade launchers and machine guns, and were sometimes sold to insurgents by Iraqi and Afghan Security Forces, or taken by deserters who would later become insurgents themselves.<sup>3</sup> However, cases like this are the exception rather than the rule, and steps have since been taken to improve weapons accounting procedures.

Probably the most well-known, and maybe the most effective procurement method used by insurgents is through the use of smuggling. Not to be confused with weapons trafficking, smuggling is a function of logistics concerned with the often illegal shipment of goods from one country to another. These high-dollar assets are usually transported in low quantities via small, non-commercial and commercial air, land, and sea-based vehicles, to and from countries with porous borders and unstable governments, such as Lebanon, Iran, and Syria.<sup>4</sup>

Over the last century, there have been many state governments who have either directly or indirectly smuggled arms and other supplies to insurgents in support of their own agendas. For

example, during the French-Algerian War from 1954-1962, thousands of weapons were smuggled to the *Front de Liberation Nationale* (FLN) from Tunisia to help them in their struggle against the French military.<sup>5</sup> This was very candidly captured in a statement made by Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba in 1958 when he said “We give the insurgents what help we can, short of going to war...Our position is like that of the U. S. with respect to the Allies during the first years of World War II. We are not belligerents, but we are not neutral either.”<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the Vietnam War, communist Russia and China shipped numerous arms and supplies to the North Vietnamese who would then disperse them to the Vietcong along numerous paths of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, or smuggle them in the lower layers of sampans which sailed up and down the Mekong river.<sup>7</sup> And today, both Syria and Iran continue this tradition by smuggling arms and other materials to radical organizations such as Hizbullah in Lebanon and Hamas in Palestine, the majority of which arrive via ground shipments from Damascus and marine shipments originating in the Persian Gulf.<sup>8</sup>

Lebanon has been plagued by Syria’s irredentist claims ever since the 1917 Arab revolt.<sup>9</sup> Since that time, Syria has been supporting sympathetic individuals and organizations inside of Lebanon by providing them with weapons and supplies in the hopes that this would someday lead to the reunification of the two countries. For example, in 1958 during the Eisenhower Administration, U. S. Marines were sent into Lebanon as part of Operation BLUE BAT to support the legally established, western-backed Lebanese government and prevent men, weapons and supplies from entering the country through Syria.<sup>10</sup>

Roughly five decades later, just before their war against Israel in 2006, Syrian-supported Hizbullah had accumulated (assumingly from smuggling operations) an inventory of

approximately 12,000 short and long-range rockets.<sup>11</sup> According to the Israeli Defense Minister, Ehud Barak, that number has since “tripled in size.”<sup>12</sup>

Like the Palestinian Authority whose 50-ton weapons shipment was intercepted by Israeli Defense Forces onboard the *Karine-A* in 2002,<sup>13</sup> Hizbullah is also suspected of being the intended recipient of approximately 40 marine containers full of smuggled weapons originating from Iran and seized by the Israelis onboard the vessel *Francop* late last year. All three entities (Iran, Syria, and Hizbullah) were quick to deny they had anything to do with this shipment. However, they were also quick to condemn Israel for the seizure of these materials outside of territorial waters.<sup>14</sup>

The smuggling situation along the 199-mile land border between Syria and Lebanon also poses great challenges. Syria refuses to recognize some parts of Lebanon’s borders in spite of the fact that these borders have remained almost exactly the same as they were 2,500 years ago.<sup>15</sup> To complicate matters further, both Hizbullah and Syria have threatened to take action against anyone who tries to prevent weapons from crossing over into Lebanese territory.<sup>16</sup>

We must also keep in mind that smuggling, especially in the Levant, doesn’t always take place above the earth’s surface. In October of 2000, Israel discovered an extensive tunnel network running from Egypt to Palestine that contained massive amounts of arms and other munitions.<sup>17</sup> The use of these tunnels, rumored to be in the hundreds, continues to be a problem in this region, with some of the most recent tunnels destroyed by Israeli Defense Forces along the Kerem Shalom border in March of 2010.<sup>18</sup>

## **Transportation and Dispersion**

After the insurgents’ weapons have been smuggled into a theater, they must be transported in a manner that either denies or limits their adversaries’ ability to interdict them from the air or

from the ground. This can be accomplished through the use of dispersion and undeveloped theaters.<sup>19</sup> According to Dr. Milan Vego of the U. S. Naval War College, “*undeveloped theaters* have inadequate infrastructures, including the transportation networks needed to provide the support required by the combat forces deployed there [emphasis in original].”<sup>20</sup> These types of theaters tend to favor the insurgent, as poor transportation networks often prevent conventional militaries from concentrating their forces, moving their equipment and supplies, and, in effect, places them on equal footing with their enemies.<sup>21</sup> For example, during the Vietnam War, the Vietcong used everything from pack animals to bicycles to move weapons and supplies along the Ho Chi Minh Trail which American forces found nearly impossible to interdict.<sup>22</sup> The Vietcong also attempted to shape their adversary’s lines of communication by forcing villagers at gunpoint to dig numerous holes at night along dirt roads used by American convoys, creating “a slight handicap on the government forces who depend (as guerillas do not) on roads and wheeled vehicles.”<sup>23</sup> Perhaps if this were Iraq or Afghanistan, many of these holes would have initially been filled with Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), which would have handicapped conventional forces even further. However, the threat of IEDs in these two countries was significantly reduced simply by paving the roads, which allowed better visibility of IEDs and made it more difficult for insurgents to embed them.<sup>24</sup>

Professor Moshe Kress, a Professor of Operations Research at the U. S. Naval Postgraduate School and the former Head of Logistics and Combat Modeling Branch at the Center for Military Analyses (CEMA) in Israel, has stated that land-based convoys in general are much more restricted in their ability to maneuver due to the possibility of slow movements caused by breakdowns, congestion, and a lack of road networks; all of which can leave them highly vulnerable to attack.<sup>25</sup> According to Dr. Kress, “During the 1982 Lebanon War, the (Israeli) logistics support chain was cut off due to extremely high congestion on the narrow and winding

roads of southern Lebanon...a situation that consequently led to severe shortages in ammunition and other supplies.”<sup>26</sup>

A couple of years prior to the outbreak of the 2006 war in Lebanon, the Israeli Defense Forces tried to tackle the issues of dispersion and undeveloped theaters through the highly criticized purchase of llamas which were to be relied upon instead of convoys to haul supplies for their ground forces along the various paths of southern Lebanon. Since these animals were found to be unreliable in combat, soldiers were left with the choice of either carrying extra gear or leaving it behind. This not only caused severe shortages of supplies among the troops, once they entered Lebanese territory, they had no other alternative but to break into the local grocery stores for food and water, which, in small wars, is certain to lose the trust and support of the local population.<sup>27</sup> In contrast, members of Hizbullah would leave the owners of these stores an itemized list of the supplies they had taken, which they would then quickly pay for shortly afterward.<sup>28</sup> These actions follow along closely with the rules and remarks of China’s Eighth Route Army, which, according to Mao Zedong when he addressed the political problems of guerrilla warfare, advised troops to “never steal from the people and always return what they borrow.”<sup>29</sup>

In hindsight, the supply shortages experienced by Israeli ground forces might have been a blessing as it prevented them from moving deeper into Lebanon where Hizbullah receives overwhelming support from the Shi'a community, who currently make up roughly 40% of the population.<sup>30</sup> Had they continued, they might have encountered serious problems if Hizbullah decided to mimic the Fedayeen and Iraqi Republican Guard, who, during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM in the city of Nasiriyah, dispersed their “weapons and uniforms...dressed in civilian clothes, moved from cache to cache, and attacked U. S. Marines before slipping back into the general populace.”<sup>31</sup>

## The Art of Concealment

The last logistical method to discuss centers on the concealment of arms. Concealment takes place in a variety of ways and can happen in every phase of the insurgent logistics cycle, from the time weapons are shipped to the time they are delivered. Concealment can include everything from mixing smuggled weapons with civilian cargo, as was the case with the *Francop*, or it can be the simple act of falsifying or forging the documentation used to describe the materials being carried.<sup>32</sup>

When smuggled goods arrive at seaports they are usually staged and sorted for distribution. Historically, this has been very advantageous to insurgents because of loose management and customs controls, and what is commonly referred to as “dwell time” or idle cargo time between transit, both of which leave cargo vulnerable to theft by insiders.<sup>33</sup>

Once smuggled weapons are picked up from their staging areas, they are often transported to fixed, concealed locations. This is often accomplished using commercial, civilian, and/or other vehicles disguised as having a governmental, business-related, or even a humanitarian purpose such as the Palestinian Red Crescent whose ambulances were sometimes used to transport weapons and even terrorists.<sup>34</sup>

Weapons don't always require a fixed location for their storage and concealment. On the contrary, weapons can remain hidden inside of land and sea-based vehicles for mobility in order to avoid detection by conventional forces on the ground. As mentioned previously, cargo sitting idle in one location for an extensive period of time make it not only vulnerable to insurgents, but also allows it to be more easily detected, targeted, and destroyed by conventional forces. However, the use of vehicles for the storage and concealment of weapons can be overcome through the use of airborne moving-target indicators such as the Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) and the newer Littoral Surveillance Radar Surveillance

(LSRS) system, but only for those governments and militaries that can afford this capability.<sup>35</sup>

Unfortunately, insurgents have been able to somewhat overcome their adversaries' technological capabilities through what is probably the most strategically complex and controversial method of weapons storage and concealment, which is the use of sensitive targets such as schools, hospitals, and religious structures. With or without casualties, when sensitive targets are destroyed, these destructive activities can be and often are perceived as crimes against humanity. This has the potential to cause considerable damage at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war.

For example, radical Serbs and Iraqis during Operations ALLIED FORCE and IRAQI FREEDOM complicated air strikes and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) by hiding their weapons and supplies within mosques, schools, civilian buildings, and residential areas which would sometimes result in civilian casualties.<sup>36</sup>

During Operation CHANGE of DIRECTION, the Israeli Air Force bombed a building in the Lebanese village of Qana that was supposedly used by Hizbullah for the storage of weapons, when in fact, it was being used as a shelter. Roughly 54 civilians, many of them children, were killed as a result of the bombing. This incident received wide-spread attention, including condemnation by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.<sup>37</sup>

A major difference between Hizbullah and the insurgents referred to earlier is that when these structures are targeted and destroyed, Hizbullah goes out of their way to quickly exploit, pay for and even rebuild them in order to keep themselves in good standing within their community. A fairly recent example of this took place during the 2006 Israeli-Hizbullah War, in which Hizbullah helped pay for and rebuild approximately 15,000 partially or totally destroyed homes.<sup>38</sup>

## Analytical Conclusion

The smuggling issues experienced in the Levant region are only a fraction of what is taking place throughout the rest of the world. The United States alone spends roughly \$40B annually on the prevention of smuggling and still can't keep up with the estimated 11,000,000 marine shipping containers brought within her borders each year.<sup>39</sup>

Yet, even though the United States is having trouble dealing with the issues of smuggling, her policing efforts have so far been able to prevent non-state actors from gaining military and political power within her borders. In contrast, struggling governments, such as that of Lebanon, have been unable politically and militarily to control the spread and use of arms by insurgents, which has in effect, partially enabled Hizballah to challenge the authority of the United Nations and the Lebanese government as evidenced by their demonstrated refusal to disarm in accordance with UN Resolutions 1559 and 1701.<sup>40</sup> It could even be argued that Hizballah's arms have in large part prepared them for a possible coup d'etat against the Lebanese government.<sup>41</sup> By using Israel as an excuse to continue receiving smuggled weapons from Syria and Iran, Hizballah has created a smokescreen for their strategic objective, that of the establishment of an Islamic republic in Lebanon.<sup>42</sup>

The weapons shipments like those found onboard the vessels *Karine-A* and *Francop* clearly illustrate the gambles organizations such as Hizballah are willing to take in order to bring weapons onto their shores. Based on Israel's current estimate of Hizballah's arsenal, the seizure of these two ships have not been enough to prevent the proliferation of arms amongst insurgents in both Lebanon and Palestine.<sup>43</sup>

The border separating Lebanon from Syria also remains highly susceptible to Hizballah's control. Although United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which include a

Maritime Task Force, and the Lebanese Armed Forces, have all increased their efforts to prevent the smuggling of arms, they are restricted in their search for Hizbullah's weapons since these actions could lead to increased tensions inside and along Lebanon's borders.<sup>44</sup> This has not only allowed Hizbullah to continue bringing weapons into Lebanon, it has forced the Lebanese government to recognize Hizbullah as more of a government-sponsored border patrol to be utilized until the Lebanese Armed Forces are able to provide for Lebanon's security.<sup>45</sup>

Today, unless the Lebanese government receives the external support necessary to counter Syria and Iran's efforts, the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces (comprised of Maronite, Catholic, Orthodox, Sunni, Shi'a, and Druze religions)<sup>46</sup> will not be in a position to disarm Hizbullah. Diplomatic efforts, if used alone, cannot control the smuggling of arms into Lebanon. They must be used concurrently with the physical severing of Hizbullah's ties to Iran and Syria via their land borders and seaports. Only then can the prevention of arms smuggling to Hizbullah be accomplished, which, in Lebanon, might prove to be just as important as General Sir Gerald Templer's "winning the hearts and minds" of the population. As Mao Zedong so eloquently stated, "power grows out of the barrel of a gun."<sup>47</sup> Without the guns, Hizbullah's activities are restricted to politics, charity and social reform, and they will no longer be able to act as a "state within a state."<sup>48</sup> According to Likud Minister Yossi Peled, "Lebanon is the only country in the world which has a military organization, Hezbollah, that operates independently of the government and is supported by two foreign countries (Iran and Syria), while being part of the cabinet."<sup>49</sup>

As stated previously, an undeveloped road network can work to the insurgent's advantage, which may be the reason behind IDF's Head of Technological and Logistics Directorate's, Major General Udi Adam, unpopular decision to prohibit supply convoys in the southern Lebanon

theater of operations in their war against Hezbollah in the summer of 2006.<sup>50</sup>

Because of Hizballah's tactical ability to disperse arms and supplies, and the lack of IDF's logistical capabilities on the ground, Israel's military leadership may have felt it necessary to totally or partially destroy nearly every bridge in Lebanon, ninety-seven in all, in order to isolate Hizballah and cut-off their lines of communication.<sup>51</sup> Although Israel's massive air strikes against Lebanon's bridges and roads did cut-off lines of communication, they failed to destroy Hizballah's arsenal and prevented humanitarian aid from reaching the hundreds of thousands of displaced Lebanese citizens in need.<sup>52</sup> The resultant damage would have kept Israeli ground forces from gaining the access it needed to enter southern Lebanon should they have decided to pursue any additional weapons remaining. Hizballah had been stockpiling massive quantities of supplies, provisions, modern weapons and equipment for many years before the outbreak of their 2006 war with Israel, much of which were stored in dispersed, fortified structures both above and below ground throughout Lebanon. Thus, this enabled Hizballah to remain well supplied both during and after Israeli air strikes.<sup>53</sup>

Based on the previous examples, it is clear that insurgents will go to great lengths to keep their weapons hidden from conventional forces, even if that means storing them in densely populated areas or in places with historical or ideological significance. Additionally, these weapons and explosives are often stowed unsafely, which puts innocent lives at stake, and not just by the insurgents.<sup>54</sup> Even if conventional forces use Precision Guided Munitions (PGM) sparingly to limit the amount of structural damage to these targets, the potential for civilian deaths and destruction is magnified due to the often unknown amount of explosives they contain.

Therefore, the use of sensitive targets for the storage of weapons and supplies is probably the most effective method insurgents can use to gain a strategic advantage over their adversaries. Any attack on residential, historic, or religious targets could result in an increased number of

insurgents and the wrong message being conveyed to the people conventional forces are trying hard to protect. This is why International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) and United States Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A) were recently issued a tactical directive by NATO’s ISAF Commander, General Stanley McChrystal, severely limiting “air-to-ground munitions and indirect fires against residential compounds” and prohibiting them from “entering, firing upon or into a mosque or any religious or historical site except in self-defense.”<sup>55</sup>

Insurgents have made every effort to perfect the irregular methods used in the procurement, transportation, distribution, and storage of their weapons and supplies; to the point where it has become almost doctrinal. The continuous proliferation of arms by Hizbullah, even before their war with Israel in the summer of 2006, has in part given them sway over the Lebanese government. For example:

When (Lebanese) Prime Minister Fuad Siniora threatened to raise the issue of disarming Hezbollah by calling for a full examination of all the activities that led to (Former Lebanese Prime Minister) Hariri’s assassination, (Hezbollah Secretary-General) Hassan Nasrallah removed Hezbollah’s five ministers from the Lebanese cabinet and made it clear that Lebanese political stability was at stake. As a result, in early February 2006, the Lebanese government designated Hezbollah as a “resistance movement” to Israel, allowing it to operate as a paramilitary force and keep its arms.<sup>56</sup>

Hizbullah’s newfound influence on Lebanese politics prevented the government from taking action against them. Israel would attempt to physically disarm Hizbullah only five months later. However, the massive damage inflicted on Lebanon’s transportation network and infrastructure by Israeli Air Forces during the Israeli-Hizbullah War of 2006 was so extensive that it somewhat tarnished Israel’s reputation within the eyes of the non-arab, international community.<sup>57</sup>

Ultimately, the rampant smuggling activities by an ungovernable, non-state actor and their foreign suppliers has not only damaged the Lebanese government’s credibility, but has further destabilized the region. So what can be done to help weak governments like Lebanon disarm its

militias and achieve that level of security and stability needed within their borders? Some notable foreign affairs analysts have suggested that attempts be made to convince Hizballah that their interests would be better served through the use of politics rather than the accumulation of arms. That Israel's possible “withdrawal from the Shebaa Farms along with their agreement to refrain from attacking Lebanon” might be enough to persuade Hizballah to demilitarize, while also placing Lebanon in a favorable position to begin receiving military aid and support from the United States.<sup>58</sup> However, Israel's disproportionate attacks during their war with Hizballah in 2006, and their more recent refusal to cease building in occupied East Jerusalem, has created much distrust for Israel and their long-perceived ally the United States among the Lebanese and Palestinian populations, many of whom are now convinced that Hizballah is, in essence, a “necessary evil” in their defense against them.<sup>59</sup>

These are obviously complex problems for which there are no easy solutions. However, as we shall see, there are a number of methods that have been and are currently being utilized to disrupt the flow of arms to radical groups and insurgents. With the help of the international community, the implementation of these methods might be just enough to enable struggling governments like that of Lebanon get back on their feet until they are able to provide for the safety and well-being of their entire population, most of whom wish nothing more than the opportunity to live and prosper in a secure and peaceful environment.

## **Recommendations**

No single element of national power can resolve the smuggling problems of the Levant if they are to be used alone. It had been suggested that the United States “impose economic sanctions on Lebanon” until the government disarms Hizballah and arrests some of their key figures for

engaging in arms smuggling and contributing to global terrorism.<sup>60</sup> However, it is very difficult to impose sanctions on a war-torn country with one of the highest Debt-to-GDP ratios in the world and a struggling Lebanese government whose been left with no alternative but to include Hizballah as part of their National Security Strategy.<sup>61</sup>

Diplomacy can also play an important role in reducing the amount weapons smuggled to insurgents, unless faced by states that continue to defy the wishes of the international community.<sup>62</sup> Unfortunately for Lebanon, the regional powers of both Syria and Iran fall into this category. Therefore, in order to disrupt the flow of arms to Hizballah, one would need to physically cut-off Syria and Iran's access to Lebanon's seaports and borders. This, of course, would have to be accomplished with minimal impact on the trade necessary to sustain the Lebanese economy and in a manner that does not leave her vulnerable to another Syrian or Israeli invasion.<sup>63</sup>

Once the seaports and borders are secured, unless the country in which the insurgents reside has the resources to locally manufacture arms, the problems caused by the dispersion and concealment of weapons should eventually cease to exist so long as any remaining weapons are confiscated, used up, or destroyed. Lebanon, roughly the size of Connecticut, has neither the industrial nor the financial capacity required to independently manufacture weapons on a scale large enough to rival conventional forces, especially under the watchful eyes of Israel, leaving Hizballah no other choice but to rely upon external sources for support.<sup>64</sup>

Earlier it was mentioned that the Soviet, Chinese, and Tunisian governments had smuggled numerous weapons to insurgents during the French-Algerian and Vietnam Wars. However, these smuggling issues had been effectively resolved, at least temporarily, through the implementation and construction of land and sea barriers.<sup>65</sup>

In addition to maritime interdiction operations, in which the French Navy intercepted a Yugoslavian ship (the Slovenija) carrying 148 tons of arms destined for use by the F.L.N , the French constructed a 200-mile border fence known as the “Morice Line” along Algeria’s border with Tunisia. This extremely powerful electrified fence, sandwiched by mines and concertina wire and patrolled by roughly 80,000 armed troops with searchlights, prevented an estimated “6,000 men and 4,300 weapons” from crossing into Algeria.<sup>66</sup>

During the Vietnam War, the United States executed a very successful mine-laying operation in support of maritime interdiction operations against the North Vietnamese at Haiphong, which significantly slowed the shipment of arms to Vietcong.<sup>67</sup> Obviously mine-laying off the coast of Lebanon would be a last resort as it is a time-consuming and costly operation. Increased vessel boarding and port security measures would be more appropriate initially so as to not affect trade.

Currently, there are a number of border fences undergoing construction in many regions of the world in an effort to curtail smuggling operations and provide security within a nation’s borders. Egypt is currently constructing a high-grade, steel fence along its border with Gaza, which will run for approximately seven miles and extend roughly 50ft below the earth’s surface in order to eliminate the movement of arms through underground tunnels.<sup>68</sup>

Lebanon’s border with Syria, almost exactly the same length as the “Morice Line” at roughly 200 miles, is sparsely populated with approximately 90% of Lebanese citizens concentrated in the cities near the Mediterranean coastline.<sup>69</sup> Although this leaves the border susceptible to smuggling operations, if a border fence were to be constructed, it would be located away from most Lebanese and Syrian citizens, reducing the possibility of civilian casualties if conflict were to break out with Hizbullah and Syria.

The United States is already engaged in boosting Lebanon’s policing efforts by funding and providing training for the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF) through the U. S. Capacity

Building Program.<sup>70</sup> But Iran's continued efforts to smuggle weapons into Lebanon and Palestine via cargo ship could also be challenged if programs such as the U. S. Customs Service sponsored Cargo Security Initiative (CSI) and Secure Freight Initiatives (SFI) were implemented in Lebanese seaports. Both of these programs are aimed at strengthening the security of the maritime supply chain through the creation of country partnerships and intelligence sharing, as well as the use of gamma, x-ray, and radiation detection equipment. Of the 58 members currently participating in CSI, the only Middle Eastern ports that have agreements with the United States are located in Oman, UAE, and Israel.<sup>71</sup> In addition to these initiatives, there would also have to be some additional measures taken to physically prevent the use of illegal ports, which haunted Lebanon in the 1980s.<sup>72</sup>

These preventive measures are not meant to be a “one size fits all” solution to the problems in Lebanon, only to illustrate that there are a multitude of options available that can help combat the smuggling of arms and other materials to insurgents. With tensions on the rise over both Iran's and Syria's nuclear ambitions, and “war council” meetings taking place between Syria's President Bashar Al-Asad, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and Hizbullah's Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah, it is a very real possibility that Hizbullah will attempt to make waves both within and outside of Lebanon if Syria or Iran were to be challenged.<sup>73</sup>

Other additional benefits to securing Lebanon's borders include the increased isolation of Syria and the strain this puts on her relationship with both Iran and Hizbullah, the prevention of smugglers and terrorists from crossing the border in search of sanctuary, and the attraction of the fence-line itself which tends to draw-out the enemy as seen during the French-Algerian War of 1954-1962.<sup>74</sup> The construction of a border fence similar to Egypt's could also increase ownership and help decrease unemployment (which ranged between 20-30% in 2008) inside of Lebanon while serving as a national symbol of Lebanon's independence, an important fact to

consider for a country and a people who, for more than two thousand years, have been continuously overrun by powers emanating from both the east and the west.<sup>75</sup>

Once land and sea barriers have been established, that leaves only one other smuggling method for insurgents to consider and that is the use of aircraft. Lebanon has only four airports, all of which have limited capacity and could easily be monitored and secured.<sup>76</sup>

If arms happen to cross within Lebanon's borders, conventional forces would need a transportation network suitable enough to pursue them and accommodate their logistics tail. That said, instead of destroying transportation networks, as was done to Lebanon by Israel in 2006, every effort should be made to build, maintain, and improve them.<sup>77</sup> This would not only ease the pursuit of insurgents and their weapons, it would hasten stability and humanitarian operations within the affected country or community. This is illustrated by Dr. Bard O'Neill, Professor of International Affairs at the National War College, when he stated that "The relatively dense road and rail networks of the Congo helped make it possible for United Nations and Congolese forces to suppress a number of regional rebellions between 1961 and 1966; the lack of comparable facilities has contributed to the inability of the Sudanese army to control the Anya-nya rebellion in the southern Sudan."<sup>78</sup>

Once weapons have made it to their concealed locations, they are very difficult to locate, target, and destroy, especially if they are being stored in culturally, historically, and religiously significant structures. Even if they are found, because of their strategic importance, they might still be placed on the "No Strike List" which protects them under the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC), International Law, and/or the Rules of Engagement (ROE).<sup>79</sup> This only reiterates the importance of either seizing arms before they arrive to such areas or immediately after they have left them enroute to the frontlines.

Unfortunately for those around them, insurgents often do not have a firm grasp on the proper

stowage of munitions and explosives. For example, two of Hizbullah's arms depots supposedly exploded within south Lebanon in July and October of 2009, which led Israel to protest the United Nations for Hizbullah's violations of UN Resolution 1701.<sup>80</sup> However, since insurgents' weapons rarely destroy themselves, there needs to be some other method or doctrine implemented that can be used to prevent, locate and confiscate these weapons and/or munitions without injuring and killing civilians or causing structural damage to strategically sensitive sites. To accomplish this, the information on the location of the insurgents' weapons needs to be obtained from the local population, which is often made more difficult by the insurgent practice of concealing weapons caches and assembly plants from the insurgents themselves in order to avoid detection by governments and conventional forces.<sup>81</sup>

Ideally, the best defense against the problems of weapons concealment is physically preventing them from falling into the hands of the insurgents altogether. Conventional forces have already begun taking steps to mitigate the risks posed by targeting strategically sensitive structures as evidenced by General McChrystal's recent tactical directive, but this may not be enough. Should we find it necessary to continue engaging these targets, we should seriously consider the exclusive use of less lethal weapons, such as riot control agents (RCA), to weed-out insurgents and avoid the killing of innocents and/or damage to the cultural, religious, and historical sites being used to store the insurgents' weapons, munitions, and other supplies.

### **Final Remarks**

Although some effort has been made to combat the asymmetric application of logistics by insurgents, conventional forces still tend to become their own worst enemy; unable to counter them effectively without using up costly resources, damaging infrastructure, and putting innocent lives in danger. Despite considerable advances in technology, some of the very same logistical methods used by insurgents more than fifty years ago are still being utilized today, and with

great success. The insurgent's use of "Hizbullogistics" has become a doctrinal recipe used to wear down conventional forces, procure and protect weapons and supplies, and exploit their adversaries at every level of war.

Hizbulah has not only managed to achieve their tactical objectives, they have effectively used this methodology to gain power over the Lebanese government and defy the majority of the international community. Based on the outcome of the Israeli-Hizbulah War of 2006, it is reasonable for us to expect that other radical organizations who apply the same combination of methods to their own operations, will begin to emerge more frequently and enjoy similar successes. This is especially true if certain economic, social, and political issues haven't been addressed and no security measures have been taken to provide for the security of the population.

As previously discussed, there are a number of options available to both leaders and operational commanders seeking to interdict the insurgents' external sources of supply while protecting their own supply chains, and more importantly, the lives of innocent civilians. However, if we fail to act on them by not taking the additional measures necessary to prevent smuggling efforts and the use of sensitive targets for the storage of weapons in order to create and maintain the security and stability needed within and along a nation's borders, radical organizations such as those previously discussed will continue to emerge...forever remaining a threat to both their country and the international community.

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